

Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A carriage for supporting a recording head having a recording surface in which at least one nozzle opens, such that a clearance is present between the recording head supported by the carriage, and a recording medium, the carriage being reciprocated in a reciprocating direction intersecting a feeding direction in which ~~the a~~ recording medium is fed, the carriage comprising:

a main body;

a plurality of supporting portions having respective supporting points where the supporting portions engage and support the recording head; and

at least one adjusting device which moves, relative to the main body, the supporting point of at least one first supporting portion of the supporting portions in a moving direction substantially perpendicular to the recording surface of the recording head, without moving the supporting point of at least one second supporting portion of the supporting portions. ~~toward, and away from, the recording medium, so as to adjust a degree of parallelism between the recording head and the recording medium with respect to the feeding direction.~~

2. (Currently Amended) The carriage according to claim 1, wherein the supporting portions comprise two upstream supporting portions as two said second supporting portions and one downstream supporting portion as said at least one first supporting portion with respect to the feeding direction, and wherein ~~the said at least one~~ adjusting device moves the supporting point of the downstream supporting portion in the moving direction.

3. (Withdrawn-Currently Amended) The carriage according to claim 1, wherein the supporting portions comprise one upstream supporting portion as said at least one second supporting portion and two downstream supporting portions as two said first supporting portions with respect to the feeding direction, and wherein the carriage comprises two said adjusting devices which move the respective supporting points of the two downstream supporting portions in the moving direction.

4. (Original) The carriage according to claim 1, wherein the carriage has a head accommodating space which accommodates the recording head such that the head is detachable from the carriage and which opens toward a front side of the carriage, and wherein the supporting portions comprise at least one front supporting portion provided in the space, near to the front side of the carriage, and at least one rear supporting portion provided in the space, remote from the front side of the carriage.

5. (Currently Amended) The carriage according to claim 1, wherein the carriage comprises a plurality of said adjusting devices which move, independent of each other, the respective supporting points of ~~the~~ a plurality of said first supporting portions in the moving direction.

6. (Withdrawn-Currently Amended) The carriage according to claim 3, wherein the two adjusting devices simultaneously move the respective supporting points of the two downstream supporting portions in the moving direction.

7. (Currently Amended) The carriage according to claim 1, wherein ~~the~~ said at least one adjusting device adjusts a height position of the supporting point of said at least one first supporting portion.

8. (Currently Amended) The carriage according to claim 7, wherein ~~the~~ said at least one adjusting device comprises a cam which is for adjusting the height position of the

supporting point of said at least one first supporting portion where said at least one first supporting portion engages and supports the recording head.

9. (Withdrawn-Currently Amended) The carriage according to claim 7, wherein ~~the~~ said at least one adjusting device comprises a screw which is rotatable for adjusting the height position of the supporting point of said at least one first supporting portion where said at least one first supporting portion engages and supports the recording head.

10. (Currently Amended) A carriage for supporting a recording head having a recording surface in which a plurality of nozzles open, such that a clearance is present between the recording surface of the recording head supported by the carriage, and a recording medium, the carriage being reciprocated in a reciprocating direction intersecting a feeding direction in which the recording medium is fed and the nozzles of the recording head are arranged, the carriage comprising:

a main body;

a plurality of supporting portions having respective supporting points where the supporting portions engage and support the recording head; and

at least one adjusting device which moves, relative to the main body, the supporting point of at least one adjustable supporting portion of the supporting portions in a moving direction substantially perpendicular to the recording surface of the recording head, ~~toward, and away from, the recording medium;~~

the supporting portions further comprising at least one stationary supporting portion whose supporting point is stationary,

said at least one adjustable supporting portion being provided at a downstream position in the feeding direction so as to define a downstream clearance between a downstream portion of the recording head and the recording medium,

said at least one stationary supporting portion being provided at an upstream position in the feeding direction so as to define an upstream clearance between an upstream portion of the recording head and the recording medium,

said at least one adjusting device moving the supporting point of said at least one adjustable supporting portion and thereby adjusting the downstream clearance between the downstream portion of the recording head and the recording medium.

11. (Original) The carriage according to claim 10, further comprising :

two side plates which extend perpendicularly to the reciprocating direction and cooperate with each other to define a head accommodating space to accommodate the recording head; and

a support bar which extends, at the downstream position in the feeding direction, perpendicularly to the two side plates and has opposite end portions that are respectively supported by the two side plates,

wherein the support bar supports said at least one adjustable supporting portion and said at least one adjusting device which moves the supporting point of said at least one adjustable supporting portion and thereby adjusts the downstream clearance between the downstream portion of the recording head and the recording medium.

12. (Original) The carriage according to claim 11, further comprising two reinforcing plates which are fixed to the two side plates, respectively, and cooperate with each other to support the support bar.

13. (Currently Amended) The carriage according to claim 10, wherein the carriage comprises two upstream supporting portions as two said stationary supporting portions and one downstream supporting portion as said at least one adjustable supporting portion with respect to the feeding direction.

14. (Original) The carriage according to claim 13, wherein the two upstream stationary supporting portions are provided in vicinity of the two side plates, respectively, and the one downstream adjustable supporting portion is provided at a substantially middle position between the two side plates.

15. (Withdrawn-Currently Amended) The carriage according to claim 10, wherein the carriage comprises one upstream supporting portion as said at least one stationary supporting portion and two downstream supporting portions as two said adjustable supporting portions with respect to the feeding direction.

16. (Withdrawn) The carriage according to claim 15, wherein the one upstream stationary supporting portion is provided at a substantially middle position between the two side plates, and the two downstream adjustable supporting portions are provided in vicinity of the two side plates, respectively.

17. (Original) The carriage according to claim 11, wherein said at least one adjusting device comprises a cam which is supported by the support bar, and wherein the supporting point of said at least one adjustable supporting portion comprises an outer circumferential surface of the cam.

18. (Withdrawn) The carriage according to claim 11, wherein said at least one adjusting device comprises a screw which is screwed in a hole of the support bar such that the screw is movable in the hole of the support bar, and wherein the supporting point of said at least one adjustable supporting portion comprises an end surface of the screw.

19. (Currently Amended) A carriage for supporting a recording head having a recording surface in which a plurality of nozzles open, such that a clearance is present between the recording surface of the recording head supported by the carriage, and a recording medium, the carriage being reciprocated along a guide bar in a reciprocating

direction intersecting a feeding direction in which the recording medium is fed and the nozzles of the recording head are arranged, the carriage comprising:

a main body having at least one through-hole through which the guide bar extends;

a plurality of supporting portions having respective supporting points where the supporting portions engage and support the recording head, and comprising at least one hole-side supporting portion provided on a side of said at least one through-hole and at least one opposite-side supporting portion that is opposite to said at least one hole-side supporting portion with respect to the recording head; and

at least one adjusting device which moves, relative to the main body, the supporting point of at least one first supporting portion of the supporting portions in a moving direction substantially perpendicular to the recording surface of the recording head, without moving the supporting point of at least one second supporting portion of the supporting portions. toward, and away from, the recording medium, so as to adjust a degree of parallelism between the recording head and the recording medium with respect to the feeding direction.

20. (Currently Amended) The carriage according to claim 19, wherein the supporting portions comprise two said hole-side supporting portions provided on the side of said at least one through-hole, and said one opposite-side supporting portion opposite to the two hole-side supporting portions with respect to the recording head, and wherein ~~the~~ said at least one adjusting device moves the supporting point of the one opposite-side supporting portion as said at least one first supporting portion in the moving direction.

21. (Currently Amended) The carriage according to claim 19, wherein the supporting portions comprise said one hole-side supporting portion provided on the side of said at least one through-hole, and two said opposite-side supporting portions opposite to the

one hole-side supporting portion with respect to the recording head, and wherein the carriage comprises two said adjusting devices which move the respective supporting points of the two opposite-side supporting portions in the moving direction.

22. (Currently Amended) An image recording apparatus, comprising:

a recording head which records an image on a recording medium and which has a recording surface in which a plurality of nozzles open;

a carriage which supports the recording head ~~such that a clearance is present between the recording head supported by the carriage, and the recording medium,~~ and which is reciprocated in a reciprocating direction intersecting a feeding direction in which the recording medium is fed and the nozzles of the recording head are arranged, the carriage comprising:

~~the carriage comprising~~

~~a main body;~~

a plurality of supporting portions having respective supporting points where the supporting portions engage and support the recording head, and

at least one adjusting device which moves, relative to the main body, the supporting point of at least one first supporting portion of the supporting portions in a moving direction substantially perpendicular to the recording surface of the recording head, without moving the supporting point of at least one second supporting portion of the supporting portions; ~~toward, and away from, the recording medium, so as to adjust a degree of parallelism between the recording head and the recording medium with respect to the feeding direction;~~

a guide bar which guides the carriage such that the carriage is reciprocated in the reciprocating direction; and

a frame which holds the guide bar, supports the carriage, and cooperates with the guide bar to position the carriage relative to the recording medium.

23. (Currently Amended) The image recording apparatus according to claim 22, wherein the carriage supports the recording head comprising an ink jet recording head which outputs, from each of the nozzles thereof, an ink toward the recording medium to record an image on the recording medium.

24. (New) The carriage according to claim 1, wherein the recording head has a plurality of said nozzles which open in the recording surface and are arranged in the feeding direction, wherein said at least one adjusting device moves, relative to the main body, the supporting point of said at least one first supporting portion in the moving direction, without moving the supporting point of said at least one second supporting portion, and thereby rotates the recording head relative to the main body about an axis line passing through the supporting point of said at least one second supporting portion, so as to change an angle of the recording surface of the recording head relative to the feeding direction and thereby adjust a degree of parallelism between the recording surface of the recording head and the recording medium with respect to the feeding direction.

25. (New) The carriage according to claim 24, wherein the recording head comprises a plurality of supported portions which are supported by the plurality of supporting portions of the carriage, respectively, and wherein the axis line is substantially perpendicular to the feeding direction.

26. (New) The carriage according to claim 1, wherein the recording head is detachably attached to the carriage such that a lower surface of the recording head is supported by the plurality of supporting portions of the carriage.

27. (New) The carriage according to claim 1, wherein said at least one adjusting device comprises at least one continuously moving and holding device which continuously

moves, relative to the main body, the supporting point of said at least one first supporting portion to a desired position in the moving direction, and holds the supporting point of said at least one first supporting portion at the desired position.

28. (New) An image recording apparatus, comprising:

a recording head which has a plurality of nozzles to record an image on a recording medium and which has a recording surface in which the nozzles open;

a carriage which supports the recording head such that a clearance is present between the recording surface of the recording head supported by the carriage, and the recording medium, the carriage being reciprocated in a reciprocating direction intersecting a feeding direction in which the recording medium is fed and the nozzles of the recording head are arranged; and

a first adjusting device which adjusts the clearance present between the recording surface of the recording head supported by the carriage, and the recording medium,

wherein the carriage comprises:

a plurality of supporting portions having respective supporting points where the supporting portions engage and support the recording head, and

at least one second adjusting device which moves the supporting point of at least one of the supporting portions toward, and away from, the recording medium, and thereby rotates the recording head relative to the carriage about an axis line, so as to change an angle of the recording surface of the recording head relative to the feeding direction and thereby adjust a degree of parallelism between the recording surface of the recording head and the recording medium with respect to the feeding direction.

29. (New) The image recording apparatus according to claim 28, further comprising a guide bar which guides the carriage such that the carriage is reciprocated in the reciprocating direction, wherein the first adjusting device adjusts the clearance present

between the recording surface of the recording head and the recording medium, by rotating the carriage about the guide bar, and wherein a first distance between the guide bar and the recording surface of the recording head in the feeding direction is greater than a second distance between the axis line of rotation of the recording head and the recording surface of the recording head in the feeding direction.